

Governor Markell Announces State Employees of the Year

Six individuals receive the Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service



Dover – Governor Jack Markell today recognized and celebrated the efforts of the 2013 recipients of the Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service. The award winners and nominees were recognized for their exemplary efforts in service to

the State of Delaware.

“These individuals truly exemplify what it means to be a public servant,” said Governor Markell. “Their commitment and dedication have driven them to provide excellent service to Delawareans.”

The 2013 recipients are:

- **Efrem B. Morales, Department of Transportation, Division of Motor Vehicles** – Efrem, a Motor Vehicle Technician with DelDOT’s DMV, was preparing to call a customer to his desk, when a customer who had just left him staggered and fell to the floor, losing consciousness. Without hesitation, Efrem leaped over his counter to assist her, and directed a coworker to call 911. When she regained consciousness, he let her know what was happening and continued to stay with her and assess her condition until medical help arrived. While she had been at his desk earlier, she told him she had recently had a pacemaker implanted. He shared this information with the paramedics, making sure that she received prompt and

accurate medical assistance.

- **Gerald Nagyiski, Jr., Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation Solutions** – While other families were home together celebrating the Fourth of July, Jerry, an EPS Technician with DelDOT, was working the Rehoboth Beach fireworks event. He started his work at 4 p.m., and at 1 a.m., while traffic control equipment was being cleared, Jerry noticed steam rising from under the hood of a disabled vehicle. The driver was from out of state and had a small child with her. Jerry helped her call for assistance, but calls for tow trucks were unsuccessful. He suggested that they move her vehicle over to a nearby lot and that she wait until the morning to arrange for a tow and a rental vehicle. Jerry called the State Police to inform them that he placed the vehicle in that location and that he was to be contacted should there be any questions. He gave the driver his business card and cell phone number in case she had any questions or concerns. It was 3:15 a.m. when he finally arrived home, and he had a meeting in Fenwick Island at 7:00 a.m. that morning, however, he checked on the vehicle on the way to the meeting. There he found the driver and a friend working on the car, but they needed a funnel to add coolant. Jerry provided the funnel and in 20 minutes, the vehicle was running and Jerry went to his meeting!
- **Emily Robinson, Department of Correction, Probation and Parole** – Emily is a Probation and Parole Officer for the Mental Health Court Unit (MHC) of the Department of Correction, who went above and beyond her duties to work with an offender experiencing psychotic episodes. The offender had not been taking his medications, and left

the state while warrants were issued for his arrest. Knowing his unstable condition, she worked tirelessly to locate him and then began devising a plan to return him to Delaware where she could get him entered into the MHC without having him incarcerated. This involved out-of-the-ordinary coordination with his family and mental health providers from out of state. She went even further and secured housing to facilitate the offender's return to Delaware once he was stabilized. In addition to this example of her dedication, she has also authored an informational pamphlet for families and participants about MHC, she speaks publicly about MHC, and she



mentors new officers.

- **John Schneider, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Division of Watershed Stewardship** – John has been a State employee for more than 20 years, and currently leads a team of planners, scientists, engineers and support staff that work at DNREC's Division of Watershed Stewardship. Testimony from his staff assert that it was his leadership and vision that allowed them to excel in several areas, including: the Watershed Approach to Toxics Assessment and Restoration, a new interagency initiative that takes a watershed approach and applies it to toxics; the Recreational Water Program, whose work resulted in Delaware being rated as # 1 for recreational and beach water quality in the nation, and Dewey and Rehoboth Beaches being rated as 5 star beaches; the Shellfish Program, which effected

the elimination of potential pollution sources to Delaware's shellfish waters; the Statewide Water Quality Monitoring Efforts, which assists water quality managers to accurately estimate nutrient and sediment loads that enter the Chesapeake Bay from the Nanticoke River; and Watershed Restoration, where a total of 2,700 ft. of stream channel was restored.

- **Debra Stiles and Keith Wolken, Department of Correction, Special Operations** – While on duty, Court & Transportation Officers Debra Stiles and Keith Wolken witnessed a severe automobile accident. A vehicle ran a red light and collided with a panel van, which came to rest on the side of the road. The van caught on fire and the driver was still trapped inside. Debra immediately notified 911 while Keith ran to the aid of the trapped driver. After calling for assistance, Debra went to assist Keith as he pulled the driver from the burning vehicle. While Keith stayed with the driver, Debra diverted traffic away from the accident scene. Their combined efforts prevented the driver from being seriously injured or possibly killed. Their control of the scene until emergency personnel arrived kept the public out of harm's way and prevented what could have been a disastrous situation.